

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-07 COME-00

TRSE-00 OMB-01 IGA-02 OES-06 CU-04 ABF-01 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 AGR-10 DIWY-01 /078 W

----- 030430

R 211141Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1365

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

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PARIS FOR UNESCO, ROME FOR FODAG, VIENNA FOR IAEA, VIENNA FOR
UNIDO, MONTREAL FOR ICAO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UNDP, EAID, UV

SUBJ: CERP 0008-UNDP: EVALUATION OF UN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

REF: STATE 72386

1. SUMMARY: UNDP RES REP IS PLAYING AN EFFECTIVE COORDINATING
ROLE IN THE UN SYSTEM. HE HAS NOT BEEN ENCOURAGED TO COORDINATE
ROLE OF OTHER DONORS BY THE HOST GOVERNMENT. RES REP FEELS,
AND WE CONCUR, THAT FURTHER EFFORTS CAN AND SHOULD BE MADE BY
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES TO DELEGATE MORE RESPONSIBILITY TO THE
RES REP FOR PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION. MUCH TIME AND EFFORT HAS
BEEN SPENT ON REALIGNING UN PROGRAM AS RESULT OF SEVERE BUDGET
RESTRAINTS. IN THE PROCESS, MUCH OF NEW THRUST FOR GREATER AID
TO LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES HAS BEEN BLUNTED. WHILE A PROGRAM
REVIEW MECHANISM IS NOT YET WELL ESTABLISHED, A TRIPARTITE
PROJECT REVIEW SYSTEM HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY INTRODUCED. CONCERN
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FOR THE EQUALITY OF WOMEN IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IS

EXPRESSED IN IMPORTANT STAFF APPOINTMENTS IN THE RES REP OFFICE AND IN CONTENT OF COUNTRY PROJECTS. THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON UPPER VOLTAN UNDP PROGRAM ARE KEYED TO FORMAT OUTLINED IN REFTTEL:

A. ROLE OF UNDP IN UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM: UNDP RES REP IS STRONG BELIVER IN UNDP COODINATING ALL ELEMENTS OF UN SYSTEM LOCATED IN COUNTRY. IN FACT HE HAS EFFECTIVELY CARRIED OUT THIS POLICY AND DOES EFFECTIVELY COORDINATE UN FUNCTIONS IN COUNTRY WITH SOME EXCEPTIONS. MOST APPARENT EXCEPTION IS WHO WHICH IS ABLY REPRESENTED BY AN AGENCY HEAD. THE WHO REPRESENTATIVE HAS A MORE DIRECT ADVISORY FUNCTION THAN DO OTHER UN AGENCIES PRESENT IN UPPER VOLTA. HE SITS IN MINISTRY OF HEALTH AS CLOSE ADVISOR TO MINISTER. HOWEVER, HIS ACTIVITIES ARE NOT COORDINATED WITH THOSE OF UNDP. UNDP PERFORMS CONTROLLER FUNCTIONS FOR WHO AND HAS FINANCED SOME OF WHO PROJECTS FROM ITS IPF ALTHOUGH THEY ARE IMPLEMENTED BY WHO REP. MORE RECENTLY, ROLE OF WHO HAS BEEN TO REVIEW HEALTH ASPECTS OF UNDP DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. IN ADDITION, WHO ATTENDS UNDP BY-MONTHLY COORINATION MEETING OF ALL HEADS OF AGENCIES AND UNDP REP ATTENDS WHO STAFF MEETINGS. UNDP RES REP AND THE WHO REP HAVE A GOOD RELATIONSHIP HERE. UNDAT OPERATIONS HAVE GENERALLY BEEN RESPONSIVE TO RES REP BUT UTILITY TO THE SYSTEM DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE CMMENSURATE WITH EFFORT INVESTED IN THEM. ANOTHER SEPARATE ORGANIZATION IS UNICEF WHICH MAINTAINS ITS LINE OFFICE IN ABIDJAN. AS A BASIC PRINCIPLE, RES REP BELIEVES UNDP SHOULD HAVE OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL OPERATIONAL MATTERS WITHIN HIS AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY. UNDP SHOULD HAVE MORE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THOSE PROJECTS WHICH ARE BILATERALLY FUNDED AND IMPLEMENTED BY A UN AGENCY THROUGH A FUND IN TRUST ARRANGEMENT. IN ADDITION, UNDP IS WORKING OUT AN ARRANGEMENT WHEREBY UN SAHELIAN OFFICE OPERATIONS IN UPPER VOLTA WILL BE UNDER THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE UNDP RES REP EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE SEPARATED AT HEADQUARTERS LEVEL. THE FPA AND CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND, WHILE SEPARATE AT THE HEADQUARTERS LEVEL, ARE UNDER THE UNDP RES REP IN THE FIELD. ANOTHER DEMONSTRATION OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP PLAYED BY UNDP RES REP IN COORDINATING ASSISTANCE IS INITIATION OF A MEETING OF ALL REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS BASED IN UPPER VOLTA. SIX OF THE SEVEN ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED

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ATTENDED MEETING AND HAVE NOW AGREED TO MEET EVERY SIX MONTHS TO AVOID ANY DUPLICATION OF ACTIVITIES.

B. COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: IN 1973 UNDP RES REP ATTEMPTED TO SECURE GOUV PERMISSION TO ESTABLISH A FORMAL EXTERNAL DONOR COORDINATING MECHANISM. THEN MINISTER OF PLAN FIRMLY OPPOSED THIS CONCEPT AND SO COOEDINATION HAS REMAINED AT INFORMAL LEVEL. DESPITE ITS INFORMAILITY, IT

HAS BEEN RELATIVELY EFFECTIVE IN AVOIDING OVERLAP IN RAPIDLY INCREASING DONOR PROGRAMS HERE. THE NEW MINISTER OF PLAN HAS INDICATED THAT A MORE FORMAL STRUCTURE MIGHT NOW BE ACCEPTABLE AND UNDP RES REP IS CONSIDERING A DECEMBER DONORS' CONFERENCE IN UPPER VOLTA WHICH MAY BE HELD IN COORDINATION WITH THE ONCHOCERCIASIS PROGRAM. THIS COULD BE DEVELOPED INTO A REGULAR FORMAL MECHANISM AT THE LOCAL LEVEL TO ASSIST IN COORDINATING ASSISTANCE.

C. FINANCIAL RESTRAINTS: UNDP RES REP HAS ATTEMPTED TO MEET THE NEW FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS WHILE STILL KEEPING ALL EXPERTS AT POST UNTIL THE END OF THEIR CONTRACT. THIS HAS BEEN COMPLICATED BY THE NECESSITY TO RECAST THE SERVICES OF EXPERTS WHOSE UN STANDARD COSTS HAVE RISEN DRAMITCALLY (NOW \$48,000 PER YEAR). HE HAS ALSO ATTEMPTED TO KEEP ALL EXISTING PROJECTS OPERATIVE. HE HAS ONLY SUCCEEDED IN THIS BY CUTTING EXPENSES OF CERTAIN OPERATIONS AND EXTENDING THE TIMEFRAME OF OTHERS WITH THE RESULT THAT SOME VEHICLES HAVE NO GAS AND SOME LABORATORIES HAVE NO EQUIPMENT. MORE RECENTLY, FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS HAVE BECOME MORE PRESSING WITH LOSS TO LOCAL PROGRAM OF POST-ONCHO DEVELOPMENT FUNDS, WITH RESULT THAT SOME PROJECTS MUST NOW BE CLOSED PREMATURELY AND EXPERTS SENT HOME. THE REQUESTED BUDGET FOR NEXT YEAR OF \$3.54 MILLION WILL BE LOWERED BY AT LEAST \$700,000. IN ADDITION, IF AS EXPECTED COST OF EXPERTS GOES UP TO \$54,000, THIS WOULD MEAN A REDUCTION IN REAL TERMS OF 30 PERCENT. AS UNDP AND GOUV HAVE NOT YET NEGOTIATED THE NEW COUNTRY PROGRAM, EFFECTS OF THIS NEW CONSTRAINT ARE NOT YET APPARENT. IT APPEARS THAT MUCH OF THE THRUST FOR GREATER AID TO THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES HAS BEEN BLUNTED BY THESE BUDGET RESTRAINTS.

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D. COUNTRY PROGRAMMING: THE FIRST COUNTRY PROGRAM WAS PREPARED BASED ON VISITS OF A MULTIDISCIPLINARY MISSION WITH RESULT THAT MANY INPUTS WERE DERIVED FROM EXTERNAL DELIBERATIONS. THE NEXT PROGRAM IS PLANNED TO BE MORE INTERNALLY FORMULATED ALTHOUGH AS YET THE MODALITIES OF THIS ARE NOT FIXED. UNDP RES REP EXPECTS TO HAVE TWO EXTERNAL MISSIONS: ONE FROM FAO TO STUDY AGRICULTURAL SECTOR AND POSSIBLY AN INDUSTRIAL MISSION. AT PRESENT, UNDP IS WAITING FOR GOUV'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF PRIORITIES AND LISTS OF PROJECTS. THEY EXPECT TO SUBMIT A COUNTRY PROGRAM TO GOVERNING COUNCIL IN JANUARY 1978 ALONG WITH OTHER SAHELIAN COUNTRIES PERMITTING EFFECTIVE COORDINATION WITH REGIONAL PROJECTS IN THE SAHEL AND WITH PROGRAMS OF OTHER SAHELIAN COUNTRIES. FOR PRESENT, NEXT YEAR WILL SEE THE CONTINUATION OF PRESENT PROGRAMS. AS FAR AS EXISTING PROGRAM REVIEW ACTIVITIES, THESE HAVE NOT BEEN FORMALIZED. THE 1973 IFP AND ACTUAL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED ARE VERY DIFFERENT BUT THIS IS ESPECIALLY DUE TO EFFECTS OF DROUGHT AND BEGINNING OF ONCHOCERCIASIS PROGRAM. IN ADDITION, IN MID 1974, UNDP WAS URGED TO OVERPROGRAM ON WORLDWIDE BASIS SO PROGRAMMING ACTIVITIES WERE ACCELERATED BEYOND THAT
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CONTEMPLATED BY FIRST 5 YEAR CYCLE. THE PROGRAM IS IN FACT SERIES OF PROJECTS AND NOT PARTICULARLY COORDINATED. THE ANNUAL PROGRAM REVIEW WAS NOT ACCOMPLISHED AS THERE WERE NOT ENOUGH PERSONNEL EITHER IN UNDP HEADQUARTERS OR IN GOUV. THERE HAVE, HOWEVER, BEEN AD HOC REVIEWS AS THE PROGRAM HAS DEVELOPED.

E. PROJECT EVALUATION AND IMPLEMENTATION: AS OPPOSED TO PROGRAM REVIEWS, PROJECT REVIEWS HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY HELPFUL AND HAVE BEEN EXTENSIVELY USED, ESPECIALLY DURING PAST YEAR. UNDP LOCALLY HAS NOW FORMALIZED A THREE PARTY PROJECT REVIEWS SYSTEM, FIRST IMPLEMENTED DURING PAST YEAR. IT HAS BEEN FOUND TO BE VERY USEFUL. UNDER THIS PROCEDURE, THE RES REP MEETS WITH A REPRESENTATIVE OF MINISTRY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROJECT AND IMPLEMENTING AGENCY AND TOGETHER THEY REVIEW THE PROJECT. IF THERE ARE SERIOUS PROBLEMS INVOLVED, AN AGENCY REP FROM OUTSIDE UPPER VOLTA MAY BE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE. THIS SYSTEM HAS SERVED TO STRENGTHEN WEAK PROJECTS AND MAY SOON BE USED TO TERMINATE ONE WHICH IS NOT SUCCESSFUL. AN EXAMPLE

OF HOW THE SYSTEM WAS SUCCESSFULLY USED IS THE RURAL ARTISAN'S PROJECT. A TRIPARTITE REVIEW OF THIS PROJECT HIGHLIGHTED THE ABSENCE OF GOUV FUNDING FOR COUNTERPARTS. BASED ON AN AGREEMENT REACHED DURING THE REVIEW, THE GOUV HAS BEGUN TO FUND THE COUNTERPARTS, THUS STRENGTHENING THE PROJECT. REVIEWS ARE HELD ON THE AVERAGE ONCE A YEAR BUT THIS MAY VARY.

F. APPRAISAL OF PROPOSED PROJECTS: THIS IS A SYSTEM WITH WHICH NEITHER THE RES REP NOR THE AID REPRESENTATIVES WERE FAMILIAR. THE RES REP DID STATE THAT ANY SUCH SUBMISSION OF PROPOSED UNDP PROJECTS TO OTHER DONORS WOULD HAVE BEEN OBJECTED TO BY THE THEN MINISTER OF PLAN AS AN OVERLY FORMAL CONSULTATION AMONG DONORS WHICH HE DID NOT LIKE.

G. WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT: THE CHIEF PROGRAM OFFICER IN RES REP OFFICE IS AN AMERICAN WOMAN. CONCERN FOR WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT IS INTEGRATED INTO PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN IN UPPER VOLTA ACCORDING TO RES REP. ONE SUCH PROJECT OF NOTE IS UNESCO EQUALITY OF ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS WHICH WAS INITIATED HERE BY UNESCO. IN ADDITION, THERE IS A MALAGASHE TECHNICIAN WORKING WITH FAMILY ECONOMY SECTION IN MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT. ONE PROPOSED PROJECT FOR INCLUDING WOMEN'S ACTIVITIES IN RURAL ARTISAN PROGRAM HAS BEEN UNCLASSIFIED

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DROPPED DUE TO CURRENT FINANCIAL SQUEEZE.

2. CONCLUSION: UNDP RES REP INDICATED A MAJOR SHORTCOMING OF THE PROGRAM DERIVED FROM HEADQUARTERS' ORIENTATION OF BOTH UNDP AND IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES. HE BELIEVES A PROJECT MANGER ONCE APPOINTED SHOULD BE ENTRUSTED WITH FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROJECT AND SHOULD BE GIVEN GREATER SHARE IN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT. THE PROJECT SHOULD NOT BE RUN FROM HEADQUARTERS. PROJECT MANAGER SHOULD BE GIVEN GREATER LEEWAY SUBJECT TO AUDIT AND EVALUATION. THIS COULD PRODUCE MORE EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE PROJECTS. THE PROJECT MANAGER, FOR EXAMPLE, COULD SELECT WHATEVER LOCAL SERVICES MIGHT BE NECESSARY RATHER THAN HAVING ALL PROCUREMENT COME FROM AGENCY HEADQUARTERS. THE PROJECT MANAGER SHOULD BE JUDGED ON HIS OWN PERFORMANCE BUT THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE IF MAJOR DECISIONS CONTINUE TO BE MADE AT HEADQUARTERS. GIVING THE PROJECT MANAGER MORE INDEPENDENCE WOULD ALSO RESULT IN BETTER PROJECT MANAGERS BEING SELECTED. THIS IS A PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT ELEMENT GIVEN THE DIFFICULTY IN HIRING QUALIFIED PERSONNEL DUE TO BUDGET CONSTRAINTS. GRAHAM

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CERP 0008, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976OUAGAD01143
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760151-0201
From: OUAGADOUGOU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760439/aaaabgrg.tel
Line Count: 272
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 72386
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 MAR 2004 by ellisoob>; APPROVED <31 JAN 2005 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CERP 0008-UNDP: EVALUATION OF UN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
TAGS: EAID, ECRP, UV, UNDP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006